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# Florida Law Banning Children From Social Media and Pushing Digital ID and Online Identity Verification, Advances

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As part of a move that, at least on the surface, is aimed at protecting the privacy and well-being of young adolescents, Florida is taking legislative steps towards restricting social media access for children under sixteen.

The bill, advanced in the state legislature on Wednesday, mandates rigorous age verification and calls for existing accounts of underage users to be deleted while purging any stored personal information.

**We obtained a copy of the bill for you [here](https://docs.reclaimthenet.org/florida-social-media-id-bill.pdf) (<https://docs.reclaimthenet.org/florida-social-media-id-bill.pdf>).**

A bipartisan majority in the Florida house has ratified the bill with a vote of 106-13. It now awaits receipt by the Republican-majority senate. The legislation calls for age verification through an independent, third-party unrelated to the social media platform, ensuring that children under 16 can't open new accounts.

Drawn up to address platforms with potential “addictive, harmful, or deceptive design features,” this legislation is aimed at deterring persistent or compulsive usage influenced by digital design.

In support of the legislation, Republican state lawmaker and bill co-sponsor Fiona McFarland equated social media usage designed to trigger dopamine releases to a “digital fentanyl.”

Florida's move comes against the backdrop of growing concern over the impact of social media on kids' mental health and well-being. Last year, US Surgeon General [Vivek Murthy](https://reclaimthenet.org/us-surgeon-general-vivek-murthy-suggests-joe-rogan-should-be-censored) (<https://reclaimthenet.org/us-surgeon-general-vivek-murthy-suggests-joe-rogan-should-be-censored>) issued a warning on the potential harms of social media for children and adolescents, calling for more research into the area.

The implementation of online age verification systems, increasingly requiring to the rollout of digital IDs, has sparked a significant debate about the balance between internet safety and free speech. These systems are designed to verify the age of users, ostensibly to protect younger audiences from inappropriate content or to ensure compliance with legal age restrictions. However, they often necessitate the use of digital IDs, which can include personal information like name, age, and sometimes even location. This shift towards digital IDs for age verification purposes raises concerns about the erosion of online anonymity and the ability to speak under a pseudonym.

**Related: [The 2024 Digital ID and Online Age Verification Agenda](https://reclaimthenet.org/us-states-online-age-verification-laws-2024) (<https://reclaimthenet.org/us-states-online-age-verification-laws-2024>)**

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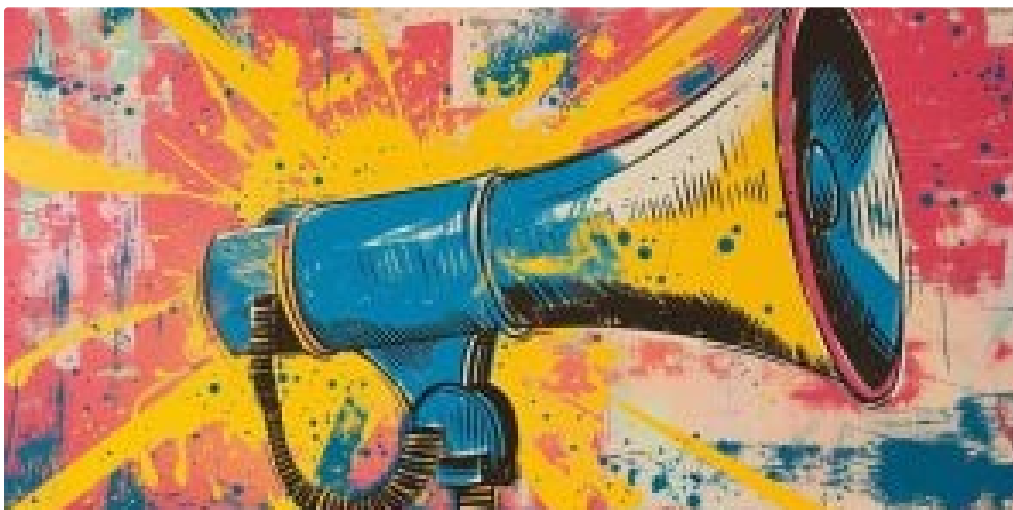
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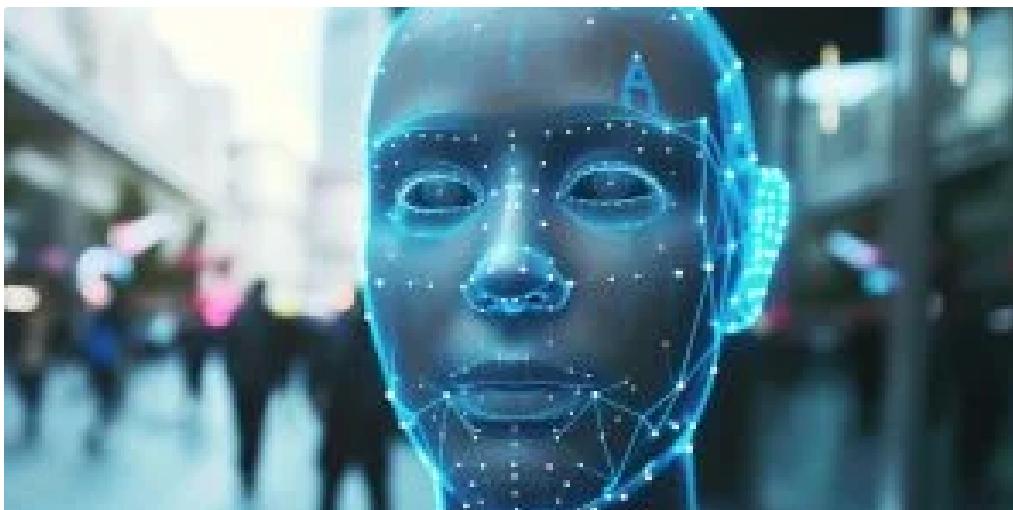


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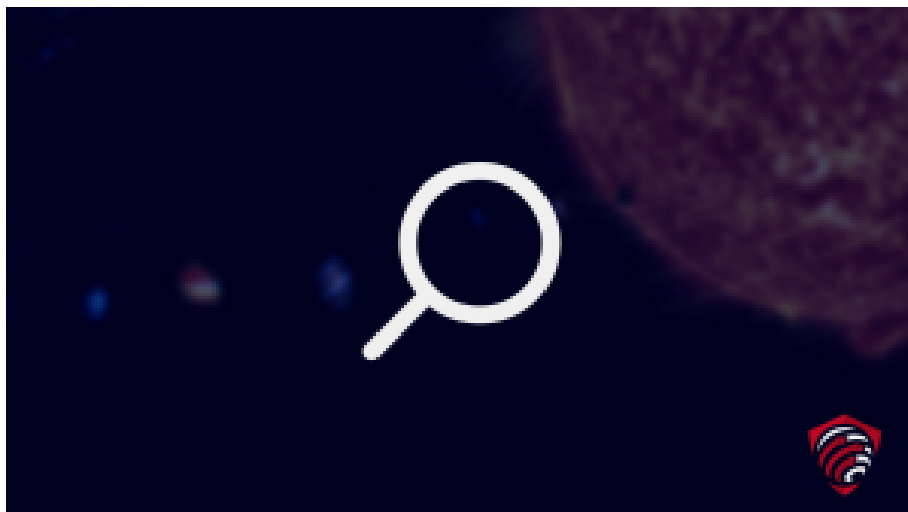
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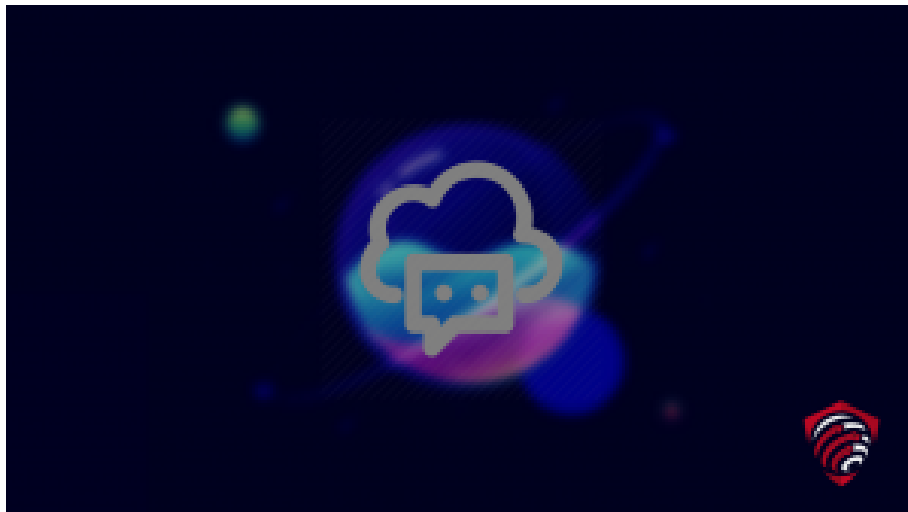
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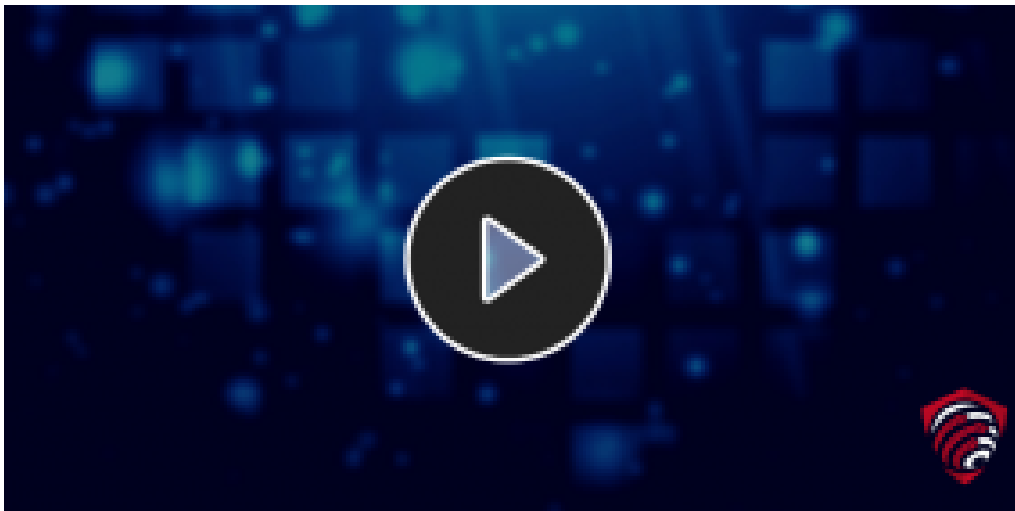
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